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# RESIST

*a call to resist  
illegitimate authority*

3 November 1971 - 763 Massachusetts Avenue, #4, Cambridge, Mass. 02139 - Newsletter #57

## THE SEVEN POINT PEACE PLAN

During the preceeding months the U. S. public has been diverted from the real issues of the expanding, aggressive war in Indochina, intransigence at the Paris negotiations, and the vitally important 7 Point Peace Plan offered by the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the North Vietnamese in July. The Nixon administration has obscured these issues for thier own purposes by advancing false ones such as the President's trip to China and Russia and the wage/price freeze.

Many people still do not realize that the withdrawal of American troops does not mean an end to the war. Troops are now a liability to U.S. imperialist aims; in their place, we now see such sophisticated developments as the electronic battlefield (see Newsletter #56) and increased use of air power. So, while the American public thinks that the war is over because its sons are coming home (causing the Boston Globe to headline rhetorically, "will Nixon be the peace candidate in '72?"), Asians continue to suffer and to die at the highest rate since the war's beginning.

In Paris, Nixon's response to the 7 Point Peace Plan was to appoint William Porter as a replacement to David Bruce. As the former director of U. S. pacification programs in South Vietnam, Porter's appointment as ambassador can only be seen as an indication of Washington's insensitivity and intransigence.

Nixon's much-publicized China trip is yet another example of his attempts to mislead the American public. Peace in Indochina will not found in Peking, as is inferred, but in the U. S. responding to the 7 Points offered in Paris by the PRG and North Vietnam.

What the American movement must do in the upcoming months is re-assert its presence militantly and educationally. We must emphasize not only recent military developments in the war but political developments as well. We must tell Americans that freedom for POWs can be a reality by Christmas, as long as the U. S. sets a date and vows to respect Vietnamese self-determination and not impose a Korean solution

The 7 Point Peace Plan is summarized briefly below. A more complete text can be obtained by writing to Resist.

## THE CASE FOR INCOME TAX RESISTANCE

It is time for the movement to give serious consideration to war tax resistance as an effective group tactic. In spite of some rather complicated talk about IRS forms and collection procedures, a simple idea lies behind such resistance--not that but this. Not fragmentation bombs and infrared sensors, not death on the Government's weekly or monthly installment plan but a little more money for the poor and for humane, radical change. The fact that the IRS might, after months or even years, collect the refused tax need not weaken the political effectiveness of refusal. So long as it spreads to more people and especially to groups engaged in lucid public action, it should count heavily. Of course war tax resistance will not bankrupt the Pentagon. Nor will draft resistance, in any foreseeable future. Yet both are important leavens in the rising bread.

Refusal has many forms. The best known is to pay a monthly telephone bill minus the Federal excise. For most of us the bulk of the war money is withheld from our paychecks by an institution. A sure way of refusing even in this circumstance is to alter the W4 certificate, a type of resistance almost surgical in its speed. After five minutes in the personnel office of one's company or university, the money is demobilized from service in Vietnam.

Last January I claimed ten exemptions on the W4, which is the small piece of paper that everybody fills out when beginning a new job. Ten--six more than formerly claimed for my wife, our two children, and myself - insured that the IRS would not receive its monthly 60% for the war machine. (The government still gets the 40% which it manages to spend peacefully. I am not against income tax in principle and believe that civil disobedience against it should be committed only when there is little choice, when a criminal policy is carried on for years.) After revising the W4 I wrote my employer, Temple University, and the IRS, explaining in full what I was doing and where I planned to send the returned tax money. Since then I have been able to contribute about \$60.00 each month to the Philadelphia General Hospital, the U.S. Naval Hospital for Vietnam veterans, and other public agencies incapable of waging foreign war. I have had little difficulty getting the checks accepted, even when the recipient is told that I am under Federal indictment for



- Arthur MacEwan

(This article was originally written for a conference of the Union of Radical Political Economists held at Morgantown, West Virginia in August, 1971.)

The immediate response of many radical economists to Nixon's new economic program was to point to the fact that it is biased strongly in favor of business and against workers and the non-working poor. Such a response could be easily supported with reference to the immediate impact of several provisions in the program. Also, it could be pointed out that with prices and wages constant, all productivity gains accrue to capital. Finally, caught in his own trap, Nixon was forced to be vague (dishonest) to hide the bias in his program, and thus he impaired its already meager chances for success in its own terms.

Such was the immediate response of myself and most radical economists I talked with following Nixon's original speech in August on this subject. Our emphasis on these factors, however, seems to me to be a rather negative commentary on our analysis. We were not, of course, factually incorrect. Our error was that we did not go beyond the facts. Leonard Woodcock and George Meany have loudly pointed out the same facts. Our error - and it is not too late to make a correction - was in failing to go any further. We should have said: "All right. This is biased against labor in favor of capital. So what else is new?"

The answer is that there are some things that are new. At least new ways to learn and teach some basic lessons about the way capitalism works, about what has been happening in the U.S. and world economics in recent years, and about political strategy. In these short notes I would like to help begin a discussion of some of these lessons. The points I will make relate to a number of issues. The ones that are in my head as I begin writing include: lessons regarding the role of the state, the role of capitalists within capitalism, implications for the "long-run crisis of capitalism," the importance of the immediate origin and special nature of the current crisis, a lesson regarding the role of labor and labor "leaders."

1) Radicals are by no means alone in steadily pointing to actions of government that amount to a redistribution of income from poor towards rich. Liberal muckrakers abound who have collected a multitude of dirty stories about "socialism for the rich." Emphasis on these stories can support a very bad political position. To wit: what the government does in relation to the economy is redistribute income; the trouble is that this government does it in the wrong direction; what we need is a government that will do it in the other direction.

In fact, the government's job vis-a-vis the economy is not primarily one of distribution, nor, when it does play a distributive function, does it always favor the rich. Without making a long argument, let me state two propositions that I consider essential to a radical analysis of the state. First, the basic function of the state in capitalist society is to extend and protect the basic institutions of the system; operating by themselves, those institutions will assure that things work in favor of capital to the detriment of labor. Second, in order to protect the system, the state must sometimes take ameliorative action on behalf of labor.

As long as we accept the emphasis of the liberals and continue to spend our time supplying ammunition for muckraking, we will fail to understand the way the state operates and we will fall into bad political practice.

2) Nonetheless, it is true of the present action of the government that it favors increasingly inequality. The point we must make, however, is that given the type of predicament the U.S. economy is in today, and given the "rules of the game", no government could really do otherwise. Profits are what make the world - the capitalist world, that is - go 'round. If your task is to make it go 'round faster, you must assure the maintenance of high profits. The government is by no means talking double-speak when it emphasizes incentives to business as a means of curing economic "ills". Capitalism is a business-based system; if business doesn't get the incentives, things don't work.

This is, of course, the basis for a primary political lesson that can be derived from the Nixon program. The logic of the system is such that in order to extract the economy from a slump, programs favoring business are necessary and social needs continue to be unmet.

3) Probably more important than understanding the nature of the Nixon program, however, is an analysis of the nature of the crisis itself. The most frequent question coming from non-economist radicals, even before Nixon's announcement of the program, has related to the "long-run crisis of capitalism". Is a depression going to take place? Has the U.S. lost its preeminence among capitalist nations? Do the events of the past two months indicate the system is in a desperate situation?



In attempting to cope with these questions, I usually find myself erring on the side of having faith in the system. But the first point I want to make is that such an error is better than its opposite. If err we must, let us lead people towards two conclusions. First, they must work like hell to bring the system down, because it is not a house of cards. Second, what is wrong with capitalism and what must be given a paramount position in our analysis is not its failure in its own terms - i.e., not stagnation - but that even while capitalism succeeds in its own terms it fails to meet the needs of the people. Anyhow, let me return to an attempt to cope with the question of crisis.

The present situation seems to me to show, first, that given the uneven and unstable nature of capitalist development, significant crises are necessarily endemic. Elementary, of course, but for those who have grown up and been educated on the basis of the past twenty-five years, it is a useful antidote to the usual gobbledy-gook. But we must also explain why capitalist growth is necessarily uneven and unstable, because it is then that people will transfer their anger regarding the current crisis into an antipathy toward the system. I am not going to do that here, but it is something we had best practice.

Regardless of the fact that crises are endemic, there is very little reason to think that "this is the big one". The prophets of final crisis often point to the international aspects of the situation, the weakness of the dollar and all that, in defense of their thesis. If one reflects for a moment, however, it should be clear that international capitalism has gone through many non-catastrophic international monetary crises before. I am sure that at the time of Bretton Woods, few of capitalism's biggest fans would have projected that those institutions would remain operative so long. That the time would come in twenty-five years to revise things would have been no shock to any of them.

And what about the increasing competition from Japan and Europe? It is real. But that is not to say that it spells catastrophe. First, given the high mobility of capital, U.S. business is not being so severely hurt by that competition. However, if the competition begins to impinge severely upon labor, things could get hot. While this is a real possibility, the political implications are certainly unclear. Second, the competition from abroad may reduce the relative difference between the U.S. and its capitalist competitors, but the U.S. is still on top and will remain so for a long time. Regardless of economic challenge, there is still no other capitalist power that even begins to question the military strength of the U.S. They all know full well that power comes out of the barrel of a gun . . .

While the competition cannot be ignored, it should be viewed in the context of an increasingly integrated international capitalist economy. As that integration proceeds, I think that the competition between New York-based and Japanese-based firms becomes similar to the competition between New York-based and Chicago-based firms. That is, the conflict is one that can be handled in a non-antagonistic manner. This is especially true so long as it is clear, as I maintain it is, who is big brother and who is little brother.

4) In spite of all this seeming complacency, I believe the present situation should be analyzed as a symbol of some tremendously important difficulties that U.S. capitalism is facing, and that it signifies some major alterations in the approach that the state is taking to economic problems.

First is the fact that the U.S. has not been able to economically handle Vietnam. It is, I think, both analytically and politically important for us to emphasize that the current crisis drew its impetus from the particular nature of the politics of the Vietnam War. Because of the unpopularity of the War, the government attempted to hide the costs through an inflationary finance policy. They counted on two factors to prevent the inflation from taking hold: a) the economy had a good deal of "slack" at the time, and b) a reasonably quick military victory would allow a reduction in spending before that slack was used up. The struggle of the Vietnamese people and the constraints placed on government action by the peace movement prevented those plans from being fulfilled. Thus the inflation could not be avoided. Those are facts that should not be forgotten.

But there are other facts, more closely related to the meaning of Nixon's program, that deserve emphasis. As we all know, the current inflation has been a perverse one. Attempts to reduce inflation have only resulted in higher unemployment. In all those years of prosperity in which the U.S. economy was doing so grandly, the Phillips Curve was sneaking outward. C'est la vie . . .

At the basis of this phenomenon are two factors: the monopolization and the internationalization of U.S. industry. These two factors, we should emphasize, are consequences of the success, not the failure, of capitalism. But it is a basic contradiction of the system that such success yields trouble. Monopolization and internationalization mean that ordinary old fiscal and monetary policies have become a good deal less effective. And herein lies the real significance of the Nixon program: the government has been forced to play a more direct role in the economy. While there may be a step backward after November, the trend is a fact of history. The government is forced to attempt to change the rules of the game. The development of state monopoly capitalism is moving right along.



I am tempted, especially in light of the recent wave of political repression, to use the term fascism instead of state monopoly capitalism. However, aside from the question of lexiconographic accuracy, the term fascism might divert attention away from the corporate liberals toward the right-wing crazies. But what is going on in the U.S. today should not be counterposed to "liberal capitalism". The so-called liberals are, in fact, the ones who have paved the way for Nixon's actions. No policy of supporting the Kennedys-McGoverns-Muskies against the Nixons-Reagans-Goldwaters will do any good. Indeed, that is not even an option.

But every force produces a counter-force (though in social science that counter-force may not be equal). When Leonard Woodcock says:

If this administration thinks that just by issuing an edict, by the stroke of a pen, they can tear up contracts, they are saying to us they want war. If they want war, they can have war.

he may be an opportunist, but he is also expressing a sentiment that is very real among workers and could take on immense significance. Under the Nixon program and under state intervention in general, labor action must take on a more political character. A strike cannot take on a single employer, it must take on the state. We shall see what happens; maybe we can even affect what happens. . .

5) But lest I get carried away, let me mention two sobering points. First, where the U.S. is going, some other capitalist nations have already been - most notably France. (But how much is that kind of arrangement accountable for France, May 1968?) Second, the U.S. radical political initiative on the part of labor will have a primary struggle on its hands simply to get out of the grips of the current "leaders".

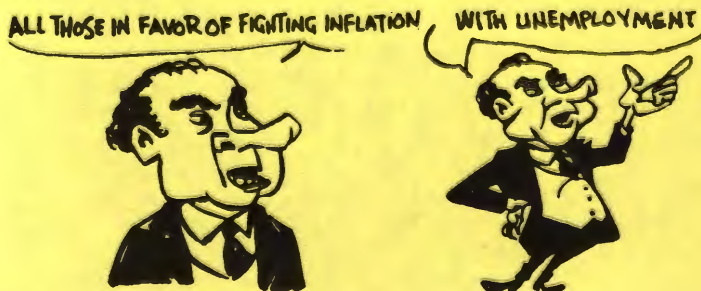
Let me conclude my notes with a comment on those leaders, the rank and file, and what the present crisis may reveal about both. The leaders have a job, a very important job, in maintaining the smooth functioning of the system. They see to it that the legitimate grievances of workers are channelled in such a way that they can be met without creating any challenge to the way the system works. They see to it, for example, that the income distribution does not shift so dramatically as to induce rebellions.

Thus their response to Nixon's program is strongly negative. They play their role. The difficulty they face is that Nixon seems to be changing the rules of the game. Their response to rule changes will certainly be equivocal. The response of the rank and file may be another matter.

Rank and file workers in the U.S. may be less class conscious than their European counterparts, but they are probably more militant. Strikes, albeit "economist" oriented strikes, are an important part of their consciousness. They will not docilely accept the limits imposed on them by Nixon's program or by the income policy that is likely to follow.

The difficulty is that while the workers' response is likely to be militant, it may continue to be economist. The present situation is one more event that leads to displacing class struggle away from the basic issue of control towards the issue of income per se. By emphasizing the distribution issue, labor leaders with help from liberal muckrakers buttress that tendency. Radical economists should be going far beyond the labor bureaucrats and their response to the Nixon program. It is our job to help move animosity to the event toward animosity to the system. . .

All well and good, but it just so happens that I do not believe there is insufficient animosity toward the system. A little more will surely help. But what we need is organizational forms and political programs that squelch the cynicism that prevents the anti-system attitude from being translated into action.





## SEVEN POINTS Cont'd. . .

- 1). U. S. must set a deadline for withdrawal of all military personnel and materiel. The policy of "Vietnamization" discontinued. In return, the following will occur: a) safe withdrawal of U. S. troops, b) immediate return of POWs, c) cease fire.
- 2). U. S. must respect right of Vietnamese self-determination, cease support of Thieu, and interference in internal political affairs. A new administration will be formed from all political forces in the country, formation of a coalition government will follow along with holding of general elections. Steps will be taken by the new administration to prohibit acts of terror and reprisals, to improve social conditions of the people, to insure free democratic elections.
- 3). The Vietnamese parties, themselves, will settle the question of armed forces existing in the country during the period of restoration of peace.
- 4). Reunification of the country will be achieved step by step through peaceful means. Normal relations will be established between the zones.
- 5). South Vietnam will pursue a foreign policy of neutrality establishing relations with all countries, including the U. S., in the development of its natural resources.
- 6). The U. S. must bear full responsibility for the destruction it has caused to the Vietnamese peoples in the two zones.
- 7). The parties will find agreement on the forms of respect and international guarantees of these accords that will be concluded.

In response to this plan issued on the first day of July, a State Department analyst said: "We dug our own grave. They're using the POWs to get everything else." Quite to the contrary, Nixon was the first to link withdrawal with the release of the POWs. Now that the PRG and North Vietnam are taking him at his literal word, Nixon ignores them.

## TAX RESISTANCE Cont'd. . .

filing a "false and fraudulent" W4. Other W4 resisters have deposited their returned tax in one of the alternate funds that are springing up around the country. Such funds are used to support peaceful and fundamental change, often through loans to groups like those for which Resist raises seed money. Our dollars have been shifted tangibly from death to life. Already there is an educative impact upon our immediate communities, which could, to the extent that more and more of us become involved in articulate public groups, become political as well.

The jeopardy that comes with this act of civil disobedience is serious, though less than that undergone by draft resisters or those who raid draft boards. The maximum penalty is one year in jail and/or \$500 for each count of "false and fraudulent" information on a W4. Until last year it was not the practice of the Government to start criminal prosecutions against war tax resisters. Since then ten of us have been indicted for changing W4s, probably an indication that the Government is worried about the growth of income tax refusal. Two of those convicted, Karl Meyer and Bill Himmelbauer, are now in Sandstone Federal Prison. (Meyer, the founder of this kind of resistance, is serving two years for two separate pieces of W4 paper!) The judge who sentenced Himmelbauer echoed the position of the Government and, perhaps, most of the judiciary when he said, "While all of us have moral values, we must set these aside when it comes to obeying the laws of our country." Of the others indicted, several have been convicted and are awaiting sentence; there have been no acquittals so far. At my own trial, which may be in a few weeks, my attorney and I will attempt to make the illegality of the war seem relevant to the judge and jury. In the WTR movement it is beginning to feel like mid-1967 when draft resistance and the reaction to it began in earnest. Obviously, those choosing this form of civil disobedience, probably an older person's and wage-earner's tactic, have to weigh carefully the prospect for themselves and for their families.

And yet, for many reasons, I think that W4 resistance and its variant with the W4E will spread in the next few months. People are at least skeptical about "Vietnamization" and may well be open to the logic and justice of not spending their taxes on Dictator Thieu while their own neighborhoods decay. Nixon's plan to visit China has narcotized us a great deal, but who will not finally notice the contradiction between state dinners in the Forbidden City and the burning rice of Indochina? War tax resistance has an old American, indeed populist vocabulary for talking to disillusioned people, one that wearers of any shade of collar can feel at home with. Finally, it is completely non-violent and yet strong and clear enough to make itself noticeable through the fog of wishful thinking that the presidential primaries are likely to generate.

In his CBS interview last June Daniel Ellsberg said that a reading of the entire batch of Pentagon Papers led him to realize that for the past 20 years there would not have been a war of any size in Indochina without American dollars. When Ellsberg's surprised, I'm surprised. It is time for individuals to declare an armistice for their money, since Congress and the courts seem unable to do so. The refusal to be taxed for this war is a logical, overdue, and pressing counterpart to draft refusal, resistance within the military, and the other effective activities of the movement.

Cont'd. on p. 6 . . .



The following call to action of War Tax Resistance may well point the way:

"On Wednesday, November 24, 1971, the day before Thanksgiving, people of conscience throughout the country will demonstrate their outrage and resistance to the continued abuse of their resources by the American government. They will act out this sentiment through the following actions:

- 1) They will go to their employers and file a W4E form or a revised W4 form whereby they will effectively cut off further criminal use of their tax money. They will go to the personnel office in groups of from three to ten or more and submit the W4E and revised W4.
- 2) They will publicly pledge to cease their complicity in paying such direct war taxes as that placed on their telephone bills. This will also be an opportunity for those who are resisting the phone tax to come forward publicly in solidarity.
- 3) These actions will take place in connection with a press conference or other public action."

Those who would join in this action and plan others like it should write or phone War Tax Resistance 339 Lafayette St., New York City 10012 (212-2970 or 277-5560) immediately. WTR can also furnish many details on the history and legal aspects of tax resistance.

- Henry Braun

## AUGUST - SEPTEMBER GRANTS

Genesee Co-op, Rochester, NY: rent for building which houses draft counseling service, newspaper, communiversity, emergency switchboard, coffee-house and tutoring project.

Women's Educational and Recreational Fund, Inc., Fayetteville, N.C.: basic expenses for women's collective doing anti-war organizing at Ft. Bragg.

The Jackson Human Rights Project, Jackson, Miss.: basic expenses for several community projects.

Committee of Conscience, Waterbury, Conn.: for debts incurred by film program and support actions for those indicted at Harrisburg.

Malcolm X United Liberation Front, Tallahassee, Fla.: toward costs of storefronts which house draft counseling, free blood bank, clothing distribution, and legal help.

Hard Times, Worcester, Mass.: part of month's expenses for newspaper, storefront housing free clothing exchange, food co-op, women's karate class.

Shot Tower, Baltimore, Md.: for issue of new working class newspaper with emphasis on working women.

People's South End News, Boston, Mass.: emergency grant for pre-election issue of newspaper.

Lowell Project, Lowell, Mass.: living expenses for two organizers beginning working class project.

## OCTOBER GRANTS

National Association of Black Students, Washington, DC: for Freedom Physicals, draft counseling in high schools.

Madison Tenants Union, Madison, Wisc.: to expand into public housing organizing, after having organized several local tenants unions.

The People's Bookstore, Sacramento, Calif.: for costs of medical clinic and film series.

Jibaro(a), Boston, Mass.: renewal of grant for storefront and T.B. testing program.

Check Out The Odds, Minneapolis, Minn.: printing costs for booklet on non-registration for draft.

Kensington Project, Philadelphia, Pa.: rent and phone for new location of neighborhood project.

Chicago Connections, Chicago, Ill.: printing and postage costs for prisoner-oriented paper.

United Farm Workers of Florida, Delray, Fla.: rent, transportation, and materials for organizing project among migrant workers.

United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, Atlanta, Ga.: aid in buying or obtaining copy of NBC's White Paper: Migrant, film on migrant labor.

The Jackson Collective, Chicago, Ill.: Literature grant for new bookstore on the North Side.

New Hampshire People's Press, Portsmouth, N.H.: to cover debts and tide them over until more permanent funding is available.

Committee on New Alternatives in The Middle East, New York, NY: Basic personal and office expenses for staff of org. sponsoring Palestinian and Israeli speakers in the U.S.

Black Panther Party, Boston, Mass: emergency grant for sickle cell testing kit, part of health clinic program.

Dorchester Tenants Action Council, Dorchester, Mass.: emergency grant for printing of spanish leaflet for welfare mothers demonstration.

Potemkin Book Store, Newport, R.I.: emergency grant for printing of paper.

